



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO MEET WITH ENTERGY OPERATIONS, INC. TO DISCUSS PERFORMANCE OF WATERFORD 3 NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Entergy Operations, Inc. on Tuesday, April 1, to discuss the results of the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the Waterford 3 Nuclear Power Plant. The facility is located near Taft, Louisiana, and operated by Entergy.

The meeting, which will be open to the public for observation, is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. at the St. Charles Parish Courthouse Council chambers, 15045 River Road, Hahnville.

Before the session is adjourned, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the safety performance of the plant, as well as the role of the NRC in ensuring safe plant operation.

The performance period to be discussed is January 1 to December 31, 2002. In addition, NRC staff will provide an overview of how the agency's Reactor Oversight Process works.

A letter sent from the NRC Region IV Office to representatives of Entergy Operations, Inc., addresses the performance of the plant during the period and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC web site at:

http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/wat_2002q4.pdf

"Overall, Waterford 3 operated in a manner that preserved public health and safety and fully met all cornerstone objectives," the letter says. However, "the staff has identified a substantive crosscutting issue in the area of problem identification and resolution."

"Specifically, although some long-standing degraded conditions were identified by your staff during this assessment period, the extent of condition was not always fully addressed," the letter says. "Also, in some cases, symptomatic conditions existed for extended periods of time before the causes were identified and corrected, and some degraded conditions were not effectively evaluated and corrected." In response, NRC plans to closely monitor the effectiveness of the licensee's actions within this area.

In addition, the letter notes: “As you are aware, since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the NRC has issued several Orders and threat advisories to enhance security capabilities and improve guard force readiness. We have conducted inspections to review your implementation of these requirements and have monitored your actions in response to changing threat conditions. For calendar year 2003, we plan to continue these inspections and conduct portions of the security baseline inspection program, as well as perform additional inspections to evaluate your compliance with new requirements that may be ordered.”

Current performance information for Waterford 3 is available on the NRC web site at:
http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/WAT3/wat3_chart.html

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